Prices of Staple Food

*Q.—213. Sri A. J. DODDAMETI (Ron).—

Will the Government be pleased to state :—

(*a*) whether they are aware of the fact that the prices of staple food like Rice and Jowar is beyond the purchasing capacity of the common consumer;

(*b*) if so, the steps they have taken to reduce the prices of Rice and Jowar ?

A.—Sri B. D. JATTI (Minister for Food).—

(*a*) Government are aware that the prices of essential foodgrains are high.

(*b*) (i) Government are building up buffer stocks of rice, jowar, wheat and local maize, so that the foodgrains so procured and the foodgrains given by the Government of India may be released for distribution among the vulnerable sections of the community.

(ii) Government had introduced informal rationing in certain urban pockets and pockets in which there is a concentration of labour population; but informal rationing has been withdrawn with effect from 1st December 1965 in Mangalore and Udipi and with effect from 1st January 1966 in all the other places (excepting Bangalore and the K. G. F.) in which informal rationing had been introduced earlier.

The question of re-introducing informal rationing in certain urban pockets and pockets having a concentration of labour population as early as possible is under consideration. Even though such informal rationing may be introduced some time later, Government have decided to issue wheat at 3 Kgs. per adult per month to the plantation labour, the labour employed in the larger industrial undertakings and to all the residents of Mysore, Mangalore, Hubli-Dharwar and Belgaum with effect from 1st February 1966. Some more towns will be brought under this Scheme from 1st March 1966 and yet others from 1st April 1966.

(iii) The question of introducing statutory rationing in Bangalore City, the K. G. F. and certain other places is under contemplation;

(iv) They have issued several regulatory and control orders in respect of foodgrains.

(v) Provision has been made in the III Plan for increasing agricultural production particularly of foodgrains.

(vi) Two Centrally sponsored schemes one for organisation of Consumers' Co-operative Societies in Urban areas with a population of 50,000 and above and another for distribution of consumer articles in rural areas through Co-operative Marketing Societies are under implementation.

(vii) According to the decision taken by the Government of India, steps have been and are being taken to set up Fair Price Shops in Industrial Undertakings employing more than 300 workers.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Re: Prevalence of Small-Pox in Bangalore City

† Sri K. DEVAIAH (Srirampuram).—Sir, I call the attention of the Minister for Health to the prevalence of small pox in Bangalore City.

Sri K. NAGAPPA ALVA (Minister for Health).—Sir, the attack phase of the National Small-pox Eradication was undertaken in Bangalore City from 11th March 1963 to 17th July 1963. From 17th July 1963 up to 31st March 1964, mopping up operations were undertaken. During this period, out of 8,15,803 enumerated population, 37,776 primary and 36,4,157 re-vaccinations (6,71,933 vaccinations) were conducted giving a coverage of 82.3 per cent.

The Bangalore City Corporation authorities were requested to implement the obligations of the Maintenance phase of the National Small-pox Eradication Programme in the City from 1st April 1964, by appointing one Vaccinator for every 20,000 population in the Corporation limits. At present, there are 28 Vaccinators appointed by the Corporation who are doing vaccination work as a routine. On the basis of the abovementioned criteria, the Corporation is required to appoint 37 more Vaccinators. The question is already under the consideration of the Corporation. However, during emergencies, 63 Junior Health Inspectors of the Corporation are also drafted for vaccination work. 30 Basic Health Workers of the Public Health Department are also utilised for doing vaccination work. Besides, there are 20 Domiciliary Midwives of the Corporation who are doing vaccinations since the last two months.

Since 17th July 1963, when the attack phase of the National Small-pox Eradication Programme was completed in Bangalore City, there was very little incidence of small-pox up to the end of October 1965. Incidence of small-pox has started from November 1965 but